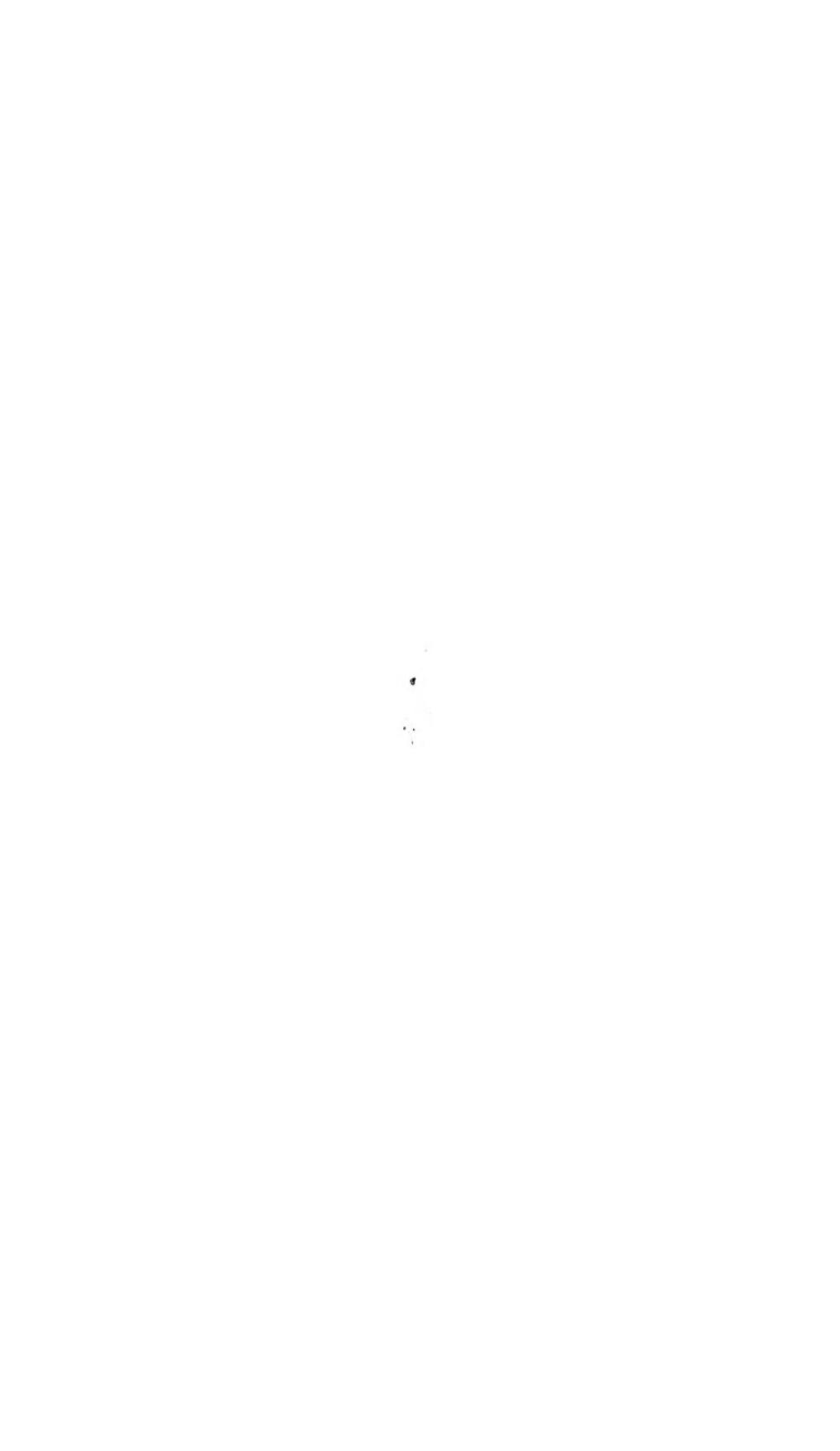


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# EPHORATA.

1870



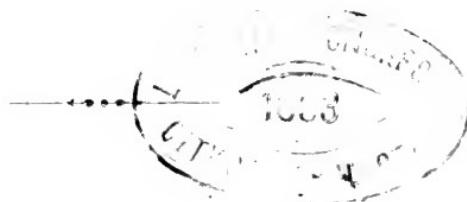
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PENCILLINGS

ABOUT

**EPHRATA,**

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BY A VISITER.



PHILADELPHIA:

J. B. CHANDLER, PRINTER, 123 CHESTNUT STREET, THIRD STORY,

1856.



## EPHRATA.

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The almost magical strides which this Republic has made in the comparatively few years of its existence, and the peculiar character of the nation, constantly striving for new achievements, rather than contemplating the works of the past, have had the tendency to bury in oblivion, the facts which gave interest to many localities, and which in future years will be sought for in many cases in vain. That such may not be the fate of matters connected with the classic ground around Ephrata, an effort has been made to preserve papers and documents calculated to aid the curious in their researches. It is contemplated to have these papers compiled, and at some future time published at length, in book form ; for the present they remain in the hands of Joseph Konigmacher, Esq.

The settlement of Ephrata was caused by a circumstance of romantic interest.

A religious society was formed in Germany, in the year 1708, by eight persons, male and females, who entered into a covenant to unite in the examination of the rules and doctrines gathered from the New Testament, and to form a mode of worship and life in conformity with the result of their investigations. The society thus formed, is known in this country as the Dunkers, which is a corruption of the German word Taeufer, signifying

Baptist. Persecution soon drove them from their homes, and Alexander Muck, a leader amongst them, devoted his property to the common use of the society, and emigrated to Pennsylvania in 1729—where the belief obtained many converts, and a church was formed at Mill Creek, in Lancaster county. Conrad Beissel, one of the members of this church, was very earnest in his researches after truth, and soon became impressed with a conviction that the seventh day of the week should be observed as the Sabbath. He issued a tract contending for these views, in the year 1725, and owing to the excitement caused by it at Mill Creek, he retired secretly to a cell on the banks of the Cocalico, where he remained for some time undiscovered by his brethren, during this time his opinions had prevailed with many of the society at Mill Creek, and when his retreat was found, they gathered about it and built cottages; so that the hermit's cell was the nucleus, around which the future town of Ephrata gathered.

In the year 1732, the solitary cottage life was changed into a conventicle one, and a monastic society was established, and buildings were erected in the following year.

The dress adopted was, for the brethren, in addition to the usual costume, a long white gown or cowl, of texture suited to the season; the sisters a slight change in the shape of the cowl.

"The first buildings of the society of any consequence, were Kedar and Zion; a meeting house and convent, which were erected on the hill called Mount Zion. They afterwards built larger accommodations, in the meadow below, comprising a sisters' house, called Saron, to which is attached a large chapel and "Saal" for the purpose of holding Agapas, or Love Feasts. A brothers' house, called Bethania, with which is connected the large meeting room, with galleries, in which the whole society assembled, for public worship, in the days of their prosperity, and which are still standing.

"The buildings are singular, and of very ancient architecture; all the outwalls being covered with shingles, or clapboards.

The two houses, for the brethren and sisters, are very large, being three and four stories high: each has a chapel for their night meetings, and the main buildings are divided into small apartments, each containing between fifty and sixty, so that six dormitories, which are barely large enough to contain a cot (in early days a bench, and billet of wood for the head) a closet and an hour glass surrounded a common room, in which each subdivision pursued their respective avocations. On entering these silent cells, and traversing the long narrow passages, visitors can scarcely divest themselves of the feeling of walking the tortuous windings of some old castle, and breathing in the hidden recesses of romance. The ceilings have an elevation of but seven feet; the passages leading to the cells, or kammers, as they are styled, and through the different parts of both convents, are barely wide enough to admit one person, for when meeting a second, he has always to retreat. The doors of the kammers are but five feet high, and twenty inches wide, and the window, for each has but one, is only eighteen by twenty-four inches; the largest windows affording light to the meeting rooms; the chapels, the saals, and even the kammers, or dormitories, are hung and nearly covered with large sheets of elegant penmanship, or ink paintings; many of which are texts from the scriptures, executed in a very handsome manner, in ornamented Gothic letters, called in German, *Fractur-Schrifter*. They are done on large sheets of paper, manufactured for the purpose at their own mill, some of which are put into frames, and which admonish the resident, as well as the casual visitor, which ever way they may turn the head. There are some very curious ones: two of which still remain in the chapel attached to Saron. One represents the narrow and crooked way, done on a sheet of about three feet square, which it would be difficult to describe; it is very curious and ingenious: the whole of the road is filled up with texts of scripture, adverting the disciples of their duties, and the obligations their profession imposes upon them. Another represents the three Heavens. In the first, CHRIST, the Shep-

herd, is represented gathering his flock together ; in the second, which occupies one foot in height, and is three feet wide, three hundred figures in Capuchin dress, can be counted, with harps in their hands, and heads of an innumerable host ; and in the third, the Virgin is surrounded by two hundred Arch-Angels. Many of these Fractur-Schriften express their own enthusiastic sentiments on the subject of Celibacy, and the virtue of a recluse life, whilst others are devotional pieces."

"One of the buildings having been erected thirty-eight years, was converted into a Hospital in the American Revolution, and afterwards occupied as a school house. The house stands no more ; the spot it occupied is still pointed out to the casual visitor, by the courteous inhabitants of Ephrata.

A few days after the battle of Brandywine had been fought, September 11, 1777, four or five hundred of the wounded soldiers were taken to Ephrata, and placed in the Hospital. Doctors Yerkel, Scott, (the father of Col. Joseph Warren Scott, of New Jersey,) and Harrison, were the attending surgeons and physicians. The wounds and camp fever, baffled their skill : one hundred and fifty of the soldiers died here ; they were principally from the Eastern States, and Pennsylvania, and a few British, who had deserted and joined the American Army.

"The first of them that died here, was buried with the honors of war, a general sermon, preached by one of their own number, appointed for that purpose. This practice was continued for some time, till they began to drop off too rapidly to allow time for the performance of the ceremony, when every thing of the kind was dispensed with."

"The place where they rest, is enclosed : and for many years, a board, with this inscription :

***Die Gebeine von vieler  
Männern,***

was placed over the gate of the enclosure. The board with the inscription, is no more.

The board has given place to a monument, the corner stone of which was laid September 11th, 1845; this was achieved through the exertions of a company chartered by the Legislature, under the title of the "Ephrata Monument Association, the officers were

*President.*

JOSEPH KONIGMACHER.

*Directors.*

COL. RICHARD R. HEITLER, JEREMIAH MOHLER, WM. SPERA,  
COL. JOHN BAUMAN, ED. KONIGMACHER.

*Treasurer and Secretary.*

JEREMIAH BAUMAN.

The ceremonies at the laying of the corner stone were of marked interest; the orator of the day was the Hon. Joseph R. Chandler of Philadelphia; limited space will permit but a short extract from his oration. He said:

"We stand on holy ground.—The soil beneath us is steeped in the blood of patriots—the very dust of the earth around us is companioned with the ashes of our nation's defenders: the solemn breeze of mid-day pauses as it sweeps along as if to take up again the notes of prayer and praise, which in other times it bore onward and upward, the odors that it had stolen from the wild flowers around, blending with the incense of piety which was breathed from this sacred hill.

"We stand on holy ground.—The patriotism that led to death the multitude of tenants of the earth below, has found response in the men of our day, who, not called to repeat the sacrifice, are yet able to appreciate the spirit in which it was made, and to acknowledge the obligation which it imposed.

"We stand on holy ground.—The sanctified piety which expresses itself in acts of goodness to others, is remembered here this day in gratitude; and the legitimate heirs of those who gave their home to the wounded patriot, and a grave to the

dead, have come up hither to put their seal upon the deed by which this land in its new dedication becomes the nation's, and to show themselves heirs not more to the extended wealth than to the lowly and truthful virtues of their pure minded ancestors.

"We stand on holy ground.—A sense of the place and the duty has hushed the martial notes that but now pealed upon the air. The lofty plume that was waving in the breeze is vailed in deference to the time; and freemen who were walking their sentry round upon the ramparts of liberty, to school themselves in its defence, have paused amid the solemnity of the hour, and stand silent in the awful influences of the place and the duties of the occasion."

The most prominent of the holy men of Ephrata, was Peter Miller, who, in addition to his Christian virtues was a noted scholar and an ardent and active patriot, he was in continued correspondence with Washington during the Revolution, and rendered material aid in the shape of ammunition, besides supplying an asylum for the wounded and weary soldiers.

Some of Peter Miller's letters are now in the possession of the Philosophic Society of Philadelphia, preserved among the papers of Franklin.

His services were frequently needed by the government, he translated by their order the Declaration of Independence, after its adoption, into several languages.

At the time Congress left Philadelphia and met at Lancaster for safety, the Continental money was printed at Ephrata.

The difficulties and disadvantages which these hardy pioneers had to contend with in putting up their buildings, may be imagined, when it is known that they had to prepare all the timbers, &c., unaided by machinery or power, save their own strong arms, trees were cut down in the forest and dragged by hand, (they had no horses,) to their required position. The locks and hinges of the doors were made of wood, and the window sashes cast from lead.

As a religious community they never lost sight of their duty to God, in their efforts to have home comforts around them, and to their honor be it said, that the *first Sabbath School in the world* was established at Ephrata.

Their history is replete with matters of interest and instances of their pure single heartedness are numerous. The writer has had the advantage of hearing from Mr. Konigmacher, (who treasures every item of information with regard to them, which comes within his reach,) many anecdotes, either one of which would, in the hands of a novelist, furnish interesting and instructive matter for a volume, and serve to make the reader a more ardent admirer of human nature, untarnished by the rough contact of the busy outer world.

They were independent of the world, an industrious manufacturing community supplying within themselves their own wants. The leather was tanned upon which to make the card, the card was made, the sheep raised and sheared, the wool carded, spun and wove all by their own hands, upon their own premises. They wrote and printed valuable books when printing was in its infancy here, and specimens of their typographic art are still in existence, and reflect credit upon their labors.

"The principles of the Seventh Day Baptist Society of Ephrata, but little understood, generally, and much misrepresented abroad, may be summed up in a few words, viz :

1. "They receive the Bible as the only rule of faith, covenant, and code of laws for church government. They do not admit the least license with the letter and spirit of the Scriptures, and especially the New Testament—do not allow one jot or tittle to be added or rejected in the administration of the ordinances, but practise them precisely as they are instituted and made an example by Jesus Christ in his word.

2. "They believe in the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the trinity of the Godhead ; having unfurled this distinctive banner on the first page of a hymn book which they had printed for the Society as early as 1739, viz : 'There are three that

bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost : and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit and the water, and the blood ; and these three agree in one.'

3. "They believe that salvation is of grace, and not of works ; and they rely solely on the merits and atonement of Christ. They believe, also, that that atonement is sufficient for every creature—that Christ died for all who will call upon his name, and offer fruits meet for repentance ; and that all who come unto Christ are drawn of the Father.

4. "They contend for the observance of the original Sabbath, believing that it requires an authority equal to the Great Institor to change any of his decrees. They maintain that, as he blessed and sanctified that day for ever, which has never been abrogated in his word, nor any Scripture to be found to warrant that construction, it is still as binding as it was when it was reiterated amid the thunders of Mount Sinai. To alter so positive and hallowed a commandment of the Almighty, they consider would require an explicit edict from the Great Jehovah. It was not foretold by any of the prophets, that with the new dispensation there would be any change in the sabbath, or any of the commandments. Christ, who declared himself the Lord of the Sabbath, observed the seventh day, and made it the day of his especial ministrations ; nor did he authorize any change. The Apostles have not assumed to do away the original sabbath, or give any command to substitute the first for the seventh day. The circumstance of the disciples meeting together to break bread on the first day, which is sometimes used as a pretext for observing that day, is simply what the seventh day people do at this day. The sacrament was not administered by Christ nor by the Apostles on the sabbath, but on the first day, counting as the people of Ephrata still do, the evening and the morning to make the day.

5. "They hold to the apostolic baptism—believers' baptism—and administer true immersion, with the laying on of hands

and prayer, while the recipient yet remains kneeling in the water.

6. "They celebrate the Lord's Supper at night, in imitation of our Savior;—washing at the same time each other's feet, agreeably to his command and example, as is expressly stated in the 13th chapter of the Evangelist John, 14th and 15th verses. This is attended to on the evening after the close of the sabbath—the sabbath terminating at sunset of the seventh day; thus making the supper an imitation of that instituted by Christ, and resembling also the meeting of the Apostles on the first day to break bread, which has produced much confusion in some minds in regard to the proper day to be observed.

"Celibacy they consider a virtue, but never require it, nor do they take any vows in reference to it. They never prohibited marriage and lawful intercourse, between the sexes, as is stated by some writers, but when two concluded to be joined in wedlock, they were aided by the Society. It (celibacy) was urged as being more conducive to a holy life.

"They do not approve of paying their ministers a salary. They think the gospel was sent without money and without price, and that every one called to preach the word, should do it from the love of the cause, and in this matter to follow the advice and example of Paul. However, they never had any scruples in affording their ministers such supplies of life as they possess themselves, and they gave them the same support the other brethren enjoyed. Individual members may give, as presents, what to them seemeth fit, in money, goods, &c; and whenever the minister travels for religious purposes, if needy, he is supplied with money out of the treasury to bear his expenses."

## EPHRATA MOUNTAIN SPRINGS.

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About two-thirds of the way up the mountain which overlooks the town of Ephrata, this now popular place of resort is situated, eight years since it was the farm and residence of Joseph Konigmacher, and visited only by his personal friends, and those who sought the aid of the water cure system, an establishment of that kind being located in the neighborhood.

At the solicitation of a few friends Mr. Konigmacher was induced to make arrangements for the accommodation of a few boarders during the summer. His house at that time would only afford room for twenty-five persons, in addition to his family.

The numerous applications for rooms for the following summer induced him to enlarge his accommodations by building a commodious house adjoining the homestead, this enable him to increase his list to one hundred, but the demand increased as the beauties of the place became known, and each year added to the buildings, until now accommodations for four hundred visitors have been prepared, and all the luxuries and improvements of city houses have been introduced.

The Cold Springs of the mountain have been turned into pipes to supply the hydrants and fountains with the refreshing and invigorating waters. Boilers supply the baths with hot

water to temper them to the weak, and every convenience for the sick and feeble has been carefully provided that could be achieved.

Those who have visited the springs and watched its development as a watering place, and its speedy advance into popularity and notoriety, whilst they commend the attention and enterprise of its proprietor in the preparations which he has made, for the pleasure and comfort of his guests, and accord to the architect and mechanics all praise for their skill and ingenuity, cannot but feel how poor the works of man are, and how feeble those attractions appear, when compared to what nature has done for this spot, which she seems to have selected for a special display of her power in making earth attractive to man.

Here she has, in gentleness, set before us mountain scenery in its softest beauties, not the wild and rugged, rocky and torrent torn scenes of Switzerland and the Alps ; but the reality of the fancy sketches of Claude Loraine, the mountain capped with the rich forest trees of our country, and the valley and slopes in the highest state of cultivation, with the farm houses dotted around in places, which, from the peculiar relief given by them to the scene, would lead one to believe that old Peter Miller himself had been an artist, and had imbued his successors with his love of the picturesque.

Standing upon this mountain 1250 feet above tide water, the eye commands a view of many miles around, overlooking valley and hills, on all sides ; cities and towns are distinctly visible at great distance, and the foreground presents beauties which are only to be found in the rich and highly cultivated valleys of Pennsylvania. When the grain fields are ripening, the rich golden yellow of the wheat waving and undulating before the summer breeze and glittering in the sun, in contrast to the deep green of the corn and oats, all varying each hour of the day as the rays of the sun strike them in different angles ; these effects, brought out more strongly by the deep back ground of the graceful outline of the range of hills and mountains in the

distance, *then* the view is magnificent, and the heart must be cold indeed that will not soften under its influences. Again, when Autumn is asserting her rights, and the trees assume those varied and beautiful colors, which seem like efforts of friends departing for a time, efforts to leave the most favorable impression on our minds, that memory will treasure them as objects of beauty and pleasure until they shall return again; when the forest puts on these varied colors, then again Ephrata appears a favorite of nature, and man's art would fail to depict the beauties which, in favor, his eye is able to appreciate.

Standing upon the observatory far above the highest peak of the mountain, the eye drinks in beauties from every quarter. The forest of the mountain on one side, gives place to the cultivated grounds around the Springs and a succession of fields down the slope to the Cocalico, in the valley, with the houses of the community and their successors upon its borders; in the distance farms and farmhouses, mills and mill ponds, villages and woods, are noted, until the eye is rested by the graceful undulations of the mountain and hills upon the Susquehanna. In another quarter the rising and falling of the mountain range is marked only by the tops of the forest trees, which seem in a calm day like a sea, whose motion had been arrested just as its waves had assumed their most graceful position. Again we turn and cultivated grounds are succeeded by ranges of hills, through which an occasional gap exhibits beauties still more distant. In another quarter the foreground shows a large and populous city, far over which the hills and valleys of another state are seen. The artist needs no foreign tour when his own country possesses such food for the pencil.

In another particular has nature lavished her favors here, situated so far above the valleys and tide water, fogs, those provocations of chills, fevers, and many other diseases "flesh is heir to," never reach here, and the pure, invigorating properties of the mountain air, are enjoyed with benefit by the consumptive patient and the overtired citizen, without dread of those ills which too frequently attack the summer visitors to country places.

Amusements suited to every taste have been provided at the Springs, and the appliances for them are so arranged, that those who do not desire to participate, may not be annoyed by those who do.

The stable is supplied with good saddle and driving horses, and the rides about Ephrata are beautiful, the roads are good, and every mile opens out new beauties in the scenery.

Baths of every description have been arranged upon the different springs, and they are all popular, from the powerful mountain douche to the children's plunge, in the valley. The beneficial effects of these spring baths have been wonderful, and so numerous are the cures which have been wrought by them, that by many they are considered, under proper advice, infallable.

The arrangements for bathing are ample to accommodate all, cold and warm baths are introduced into the hotel for the accommodation of invalids. The mountain Douche has a fall of twenty-five feet and is a favorite bath with the gentlemen visitors.

The water is of the purest quality, both for drinking and bathing, being pure, soft, sandstone and slate; it possesses highly healthful qualities, which have been evinced in very numerous instances upon invalids who have tested it.

There are a number of different springs upon the premises which vary in temperature from 49 to 52 degrees, Fehrenheit.

The country around is in the highest state of cultivation, and arrangements are entered into, so as to have the table supplied constantly with an abundance of every seasonable article, and the experience of eight years has enabled the proprietor to entirely avoid any difficulty in this particular.

Great care is taken in the selection of cooks and waiters, and no expense is spared in securing the services of the best. The business of the house is conducted in a quiet orderly manner, and a system prevails which insures that no guest shall lack careful and prompt attention.

In the household, ladies will find careful and attentive maids,

and a supervision over their comforts unobtrusive yet successful.

Ephrata Mountain Springs have been in existence as a watering place for eight years, and each succeeding summer has witnessed increased accommodations insufficient to meet the increasing demands for rooms ; the company, composed of residents of almost every State of the union, have always expressed themselves delighted with their visit and many are yearly guests. A disposition has always prevailed to please and be pleased, and this, united to the attractions of the place itself, could not fail to make time pass agreeably, and render the anticipation of another visit pleasurable.

During the past winter, additions and improvements have been made, which will, it is hoped, meet with the approval of the guests. Gardens and hot houses have been added, and the lovers of flowers will find them in profusion, both as to variety and quantity.

In order that his guests may have one of the comforts of country residence in perfection, Mr. Konigmacher has made his arrangements for supplying the table with every variety of vegetables, *raised upon the premises* ; transferred immediately from the garden to the cook, and placed upon the table within a few hours of the time they leave the vines, vegetables present a striking contrast to those which reach the tables of the citizens of crowded cities, carted for miles through the dust and sun and exposed for hours in the market.

The cellar is properly cared for as well as the larder, and wines and liquors are selected with the greatest care. In short, nothing has been neglected that can contribute to the comfort and convenience of the guests, and support the reputation of the place, which has been established entirely upon its own merits. No extra exception has ever been made to secure patronage, more than to please those who did come, the success of this course has been fully manifested, in the fact that boarders of the previous year return the following season, accompanied by friends who are induced to try Ephrata from what they have heard of it.

Every arrangement possible has been made to render the access to the Springs easy from all quarters. Lines of stages connect at Lancaster with the morning and noon trains from Philadelphia, Harrisburg, York and Baltimore, stages leaving Reading upon the arrival of the early morning train from Philadelphia, arrive at Ephrata at 12 o'clock, noon. The time from Philadelphia to the Springs by either of these routes is five hours.

For reference we copy from Mr. Konigmacher's circular, the times and distances by private conveyance from Philadelphia.

*Direct Route for Private Carriages from Philadelphia to the Springs.*

Turnpike to Downington,	-	-	-	-	-	30 miles.
" to Ephrata,	-	-	-	-	-	28 "
<hr/>						58 miles.

*The best Summer Route is via the West Chester Road and the Boot Road.*

From Philadelphia to Walkerstown, at the Columbia

Railroad,	-	-	-	-	-	26 miles.
thence to Massey's Tannery,	-	-	-	-	-	3½ "
" to Lionville,	-	-	-	-	-	4 "
" to Eagle Tavern,	-	-	-	-	-	2 "
" to Wallace Tavern,	-	-	-	-	-	4 "
" to Loag's Corner,	-	-	-	-	-	2½ "
" to Turnpike Top of Hill,	-	-	-	-	-	2½ "
" to Morgantown,	-	-	-	-	-	4 "
" to Churchtown,	-	-	-	-	-	3 "
" to Fairville,	-	-	-	-	-	3½ "
" to Hinkletown,	-	-	-	-	-	4 "
" to Ephrata Springs,	-	-	-	-	-	3 "
<hr/>						62 miles.

## THE NOBILITY OF CHRISTIANITY.

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In the sketch of the early history of Ephrata, we had occasion to speak of Peter Miller. A few extracts from a well written sketch by Wm. M. Fahnestock, M. D., founded upon an incident of the Revolution, will serve more fully to illustrate the singleness of purpose and purity of spirit of the early fathers of Ephrata.

"It is an easy matter to be a friend, and a very bold friend, in a good cause, while that cause is popular and it prospers; but it takes a stout heart, and a very stout heart, to embrace a cause under unpropitious circumstances and sore persecutions, and that particularly when its interests and its prospects of success are on the wane, and it is likely to overwhelm its advocates with infamy and obloquy. The contrary course has ever been the tendency and practice of mankind, generally; nay, thousands have ever been found ready to turn their heel against the most holy cause they may have espoused, when dark hours lower and portentous reverses beset them. Every period of the world's history, in every nation on earth, affords numerous and pertinent illustrations of this position; but it was a distinguished characteristic, in the noble struggle of our forefathers for Independence, that few, very few, comparatively, of such renegades were found among the sires of the Revolution. Next to Benedict Arnold, we may, perhaps, rank Michael Widman, not for any corresponding traits of talent or character, but for his perfidy and pusillanimity.

"Soon as the news was spread abroad of the colonies having thrown off their allegiance to their Sovereign, the King of Great

Britain—the people of almost every country or district organized themselves into *Committees of Safety*; who undertook to succor the cause of Freedom, and aid in supplying the means to carry on the conflict for Independence. Distinguished among these organizations, was the Committee of Safety, of Lancaster county, Pennsylvania; at whose head was Michael Widman, a prominent, enterprising citizen, who had been exceedingly zealous in the cause of his country.

“Widman kept a public house at the crossings of the Lancaster and Reading road with the Brandywine and Paxton road, a short distance from Ephrata, the German Seventh-day Baptist settlement. There was no man more active, nor of bolder pretensions, than the same Michael Widman, while the star of Freedom was in the ascendant; but he proved to be only a fair-weather man—a time serving, truckling dastard—one moved by the lowest impulses of the human heart, the basest cowardice and the basest treachery.

“One evening, soon after General Howe had taken possession of the city of Philadelphia, two men, who had come incog. to reconnoitre the Ephrata establishment, to which place the wounded soldiers were sent by General Washington, after the battle of Brandywine, rode up to Widman’s tavern, and asked for lodgings. While they were seated at their supper, soon provided, they addressed Widman pleasantly, who was standing with his back to an open window; and after some common-place remarks, Widman blusteringly inquired, “Whether they knew how that insidious scoundrel General Howe was getting along in Philadelphia.”

“Flushed, instantly, by the invidious remark, one of the men asked with some warmth, “What, sir, would you think if you were to see General Howe before you?”

“Think?” he replied, as hastily, “I think I should see as damn’d a scoundrel as ever walked.”

“In an instant the stranger sprang on his feet, and present-

ing a pistol to Widman's breast, exclaimed, " You ——— rebel, you are a dead man."

" With as great agility, Widman threw himself out of the window, backwards, and thus saved himself. As the night was dark, he eluded pursuit ; and the strangers, fearing a disturbance in the neighborhood from the occurrence, left immediately, and were never seen again in the parts.

Although a tavern keeper, Widman was the most prominent man in that part of the country at the time, and always exercised an influence, for weal or for wo, as he bent his inclinations. He lived about midway between Ephrata and the old German Reformed Church of that vicinity ; to which Peter Miller ministered before he embraced the principles of the Seventh-day Baptists, and became a brother in the Monastic Establishment ; over which he was soon called to preside, as Prior. Widman was one of the '*Vorstchers*' in the German Reformed Church at the time Miller changed his views of divine truth, and attached himself to the Baptists, and he persecuted him unrelentingly, and to the most shameful extent ; even made it his habit to spit in the venerable old man's face, every time and every where he met him, and otherwise abused and maltreated him scandalously.

After Widman's escape through the window, he first directed his course to the cornfield, then to the rocky margin of the Kochhalekung, (now Cocalico,) but not feeling safe or secure anywhere, and regarding his days numbered if detected, he, in his extremity, sought the place where no one would ever suspect him of being concealed, and secreted himself in the Brother's House in Ephrata, of whom he had been such a shameless reviler and persecutor—not only of the Prior, but many of the other brethren. Entering its long narrow passages, which were never barred at night, he made his way quietly to the attic, or rather the upper, unoccupied, loft, in the peak of its high roof, and there lay, behind a stack of chimneys, three days and three nights, without food or drink.

Ruminating on his position, his sad predicament, and fearing

the worst, he resolved to go to Philadelphia, and endeavor to conciliate General Howe; and finding his way out, again, about midnight on the fourth night, he communicated his purpose to his wife, supplied himself with money and such clothing as he deemed needful, and set out at once for the city.

"On his arrival in Philadelphia, he hastened to General Howe's Quarters, and asked admission on the plea of having important matters to communicate to the commanding officer.

"When Widman was ushered into the presence of General Howe, he became very much embarrassed, and could not give utterance to a single word. To break that unmeaning pause, the General inquired, 'With whom am I in communication?' Widman hesitated, and then said, that 'when assured that forgiveness would be granted to one who had embraced the American cause from the onset, and had, in his zeal, been discourteous to the royal cause and its adherents, he would add important information of stores and ammunition concealed for the rebels.'

"While making this declaration, two officers were thumbing a book of entry on record before them, and before General Howe opened his lips in reply, the officers directed his attention to the page before them. After reading a short paragraph, during which he glanced his eye several times at Widman he suddenly exclaimed, 'Ah! sir, you are Michael Widman.'

"It was like a thunderbolt to him. He fell on his knees, and besought his mercy; and not only begged like a poor culprit, but proffered his services to perform any duty against the Americans.

"General Howe's only reply was, 'that it was the policy of the British officers to encourage disaffection in the rebel ranks; yet, one who had occupied such a position in the confidence of his countrymen, as he, Widman had, and could prove treacherous to them on so slight a pretext—such a cowardly, contemptible pretext, could never be trusted in the Royal cause;" and gave him permission to depart, with orders that he be seen safely beyond the English out-posts. Widman had not left his home two days before his wife proclaimed his purpose of dark treachery.

Despatches were sent to all the American stations connected with the immediate detachments, apprising the officers in command, and the Committee of Safety of the lower counties, of Widman's design, and all were on the alert to secure him.

"On approaching the first out-posts of the American lines, he was discovered and arrested. He was carried to the nearest Block House, at the Turk's Head, now West Chester, where he was carefully kept in durance until a Court Martial was summoned on his case.

"The action of the Court was prompt and summary, and he adjudged to be hung—the penalty for traitors in that day.

"Among all who expressed an opinion on his base treachery, among his neighbors, who denounced him without stint, there was but one person who withheld condemnation and denunciation—but one soul that cherished a kindly thought for him; and that was Peter Miller—the much-abused Peter Miller.

"Peter Miller, on hearing of his arrest set out immediately, to the Camp at the Valley Forge; at which place he arrived, just as General Washington had approved and despatched, by a courier, the finding of the Court Martial. Miller, being intimately acquainted with General Lee, who had visited him frequently, at Ephrata, as a Scholar, was presented to the Commander-in-Chief immediately. Washington received him graciously, for he had heard much of him favorably, as connected with the Ephrata Monastic establishment, during the war of 1756—the French war, as it was denominated—and had the highest testimonials of him in advance of this interview, from all the Officers and Surgeons in attendance on the wounded at the Cloister.

"Washington requested him to be seated; but Miller replied, that his business with him would not admit of a moment's delay—that it required immediate despatch: and instantly proceeded to plead for mercy towards Widman most forcibly, most eloquently.

"It was a majestic tableau to look upon the American Com-

nder-in-Chief, General Lee, and several other staff-officers, and Peter Miller, in his monastic wardrobe standing in front, forming a most imposing group. Peter Miller was a tall man, of much grace, clad in a long grey tunie or toga, secured by a simple belt around his waist, while the cowl thrown back exposed his exuberent snowy hair and strong white beard, flowing in graceful waves over his shoulders, and covering his whole chest in front, while his expressive face, strongly marked with intelligence and benignity, was animated by the warmest benevolence, as he sued for the life of a fellow-being. All were absorbed in listening to the burning words falling from the Prior's lips, which subdued the military idea of *retaliation* almost entirely, in every breast, all began to regard the Commander-in-Chief as disposed to exercise his prerogative of mercy; but rallying himself to the responsibility of his station, he replied: 'Friend Miller, there is scarcely any thing in this world, that I would deny to you, but such is the state of public affairs, that it would be fatal to our cause, not to be stringent, inexorable, in such matters, and make examples of renegades to the cause of Liberty; otherwise I should most cheerfully release your friend'—

"'Friend!' exclaimed Miller, interrupting General Washington, and at the same time throwing up both his hands, as if in attestation to the Searcher of Hearts—'he is my worst enemy—my incessant reviler. For a Friend I might not importune you; but Widman being, and having been, for years, my worst, my malignant, persecuting enemy, my religion teaches me "*to pray for those who despitfully use me.*"'

"The tears coursed down the brave old Commander's cheeks, and taking Miller by the hand he replied: "My dear friend, I thank you for this lesson of Christian charity. I cannot resist such a manifestation of our divine religion; the pardon shall be granted on one condition, and that is, you be the bearer of it yourself, and hand it to the Commanding Officer at Turk's Head, in Widman's presence."

"Miller assented to the condition. The pardon was prepared

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with the least possible delay, and handed to the Prior, who sat out immediately, and reached the Turk's Head on foot, late that night, a distance of eighteen or twenty miles.

"Rising early next morning, after a sleepless night, he found the front of the Block House surrounded by a few soldiers drawn up in a hollow square, having a gibbet in the centre, and Widman standing on the step, with a rope adjusted round his neck, addressing those present. He acknowledged his treachery, and acquiesced in the award ; warned them to faithfulness and steadfastness to the cause of Liberty ; and just as he was beseeching mercy from above, Miller stepped forward and handed to the commanding officer a package stating in an undertone, that it was from the Commander-in-Chief, in reference to the matter before them. While the Commander of the post was perusing the document, Widman espied Peter Miller. He blushed, and became greatly agitated, not knowing anything of the design of the Prior's visit, and could only assign his presence to the gratification it would afford him to see so vile and abusive a persecutor receive his just deserts. Widman, summoning up courage, addressed Miller from where he stood : 'Peter Miller, whatever has prompted your presence at this place, at this time, I avail myself of the occasion to acknowledge my great and multiplied abuse and persecution, with which I have followed you for years past ; and esteem it the kindest providence, that I have the opportunity to retract my numerous villifications and outrages upon you and crave your forgiveness. My unmitigated persecution of you was beyond measure, and although I have no right to look for forgiveness for such wanton maltreatment, yet I trust that I may find pardon above' — "The Commanding Officer interrupted Widman at this point, by announcing to him, that the Commander-in-chief had granted a pardon for his crime ; and presenting Peter Miller, added, 'Here is your deliverer.' "















































































































































































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